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New South Wales in Focus

Population growth in New South Wales increased last year – although the rate of growth is still lower than 5 years ago, the state's average household is worth more than \$563,000 and the number of reported crimes are on the decline, according to a detailed study of NSW released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

Population - The State's annual growth rate (0.8%) increased over that recorded in 2004 (0.6%), but continued to be lower than five years ago (1.2%).

Housing - In 2004-05, the average first home buyer's loan in NSW was \$259,400 - an increase of 53% since 1999-2000. In Sydney, the established house price index fell by 0.9% in 2004-05, the first annual negative movement reported over the past five years.

Household wealth - In 2003-04 the average household net worth was \$563,200, with the net value of the home accounting for half of this wealth.

Families - In 2005 there were 2.6 million households in NSW and 1.8 million families. One-parent families with dependant children accounted for 22% of all families with dependant children. The proportion of children without an employed parent declined between 2000 (19.4%) and 2004 (15.7%).

Child Care - In 2005, 26% of children aged under 3 years attended formal child care, rising to 74% of 3-year-olds at child care or preschool and 88% of 4-year-olds. Grandparents or other relatives also contributed child care to over a third of children in these age groups.

Crime and Justice - Since 2000, overall reported property crime has decreased by 27%, with robbery incidents declining 34%, home break-ins declining 40% and motor vehicle theft declining 45%.

Health - Overall health is improving with those reporting fair or poor health declining between 2001 (18.4%) and 2005 (16.6%), death rates declining (6.9 per 1,000 to 6.3), and life expectancy increasing (to 78 years for males and 83 years for females).

Education - The number of students enrolled in vocational education and training has fallen by 19% since 2000 to 517,500 students in 2004. However, new apprentices and trainees in training have increased from 82,900 (2000) to 118,500 in 2004.

Economy - In 2004-05, China surpassed USA becoming NSW's top import trading partner, accounting for over \$9.7bn worth of goods. Japan continues to remain NSW biggest export market, exporting \$5.4bn to Japan in 2004-05.

More details are available in **New South Wales In Focus, June 2006** (cat. no. 1338.1) available free of charge from the ABS web site <www.abs.gov.au>.

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